UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF MUSIC

University of Toronto Symphony Orchestra (UTSO)

Uri Mayer, *conductor*

Saturday, November 30, 2024 at 8 pm | Metropolitan United Church, 56 Queen St East

The UTSO concerts are made possible in part by a generous gift from Neville Austin.

PROGRAM

The Bartered Bride Overture

Bedřich Smetana (1824–1884)

Iberia: Le matin d'un jour de fête

Claude Debussy (1862–1918)

Finlandia, Op. 26

Jean Sibelius (1865–1957)

Matheus Coelho do Nascimento, *conductor*

Intermission

Symphony No.4, Op.29 ("The inextinguishable")

Carl Nielsen (1865–1931)

I. Allegro
II. Poco allegretto
III. Poco adagio quasi andante
IV. Allegro

We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years, it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

As part of the Faculty's commitment to improving Indigenous inclusion, we call upon all members of our community to start/continue their personal journeys towards understanding and acknowledging Indigenous peoples' histories, truths and cultures. Visit indigenous.utoronto.ca to learn more.

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA (UTSO)
Uri Mayer, *conductor*

Violin I
Siri Ducharme-Leblanc, *concertmaster*
Samantha Cardwell
Viviana Xiao Qi Chan
Natasha Hendra
Lauren Da-Hyun Lee
Elana You-Lan Li
Natalia (Natasha) Morozova
William Sale
Kasey Scoboria
Deborah Alexandra White
Mizuki Yaesawa
Esther Yao
Amanda Yee
Qiqi Zhang

Violin II
Jeanny Jung, *principal*
Bridget Alexander
Maya Budzinski
Caleb Chiu
Sharon Jin
Aura Kwon
Monica Lakshmi Vipanchi Rallabhandi
Cameron Liao
Selen Nsabiyeze
Sophie Reimer-Epp
Nga Yu (Pely) Yau

Viola
Meika Sonntag, *principal*
Dai Hao (Tony) Chen
Ji-A Choi
Abby Minor
Rita Ren

Horn
Anik Caissie
Julia Fowell
Finn Parks
Chun Yu (Dia) Tam

Trumpet
Grace Locker
Justin Ko
Jayan Kim
Gabriella Caitlyn Liu
Tate Zdanowicz

Cello
Mario Rodriguez McMillan, *principal*
Maren Helyar
Chloe Liang
Tzu-Chieh (Jill) Liang
Tomas Pena Paz Y Mino
Mariana Pit Torres Siebiger
Tuuli Olo
Ryan Wu

Double Bass
Aidan Lai Chak Chong
Hsuan-Hao (Sean) Liu

Flute/Piccolo
Anwen Robertson
Eleanor Song

Oboe
Jason Fan
Chelyn Yoo

Clarinet
Marco Ding
Andrej Jozef Osko
Niki Tang

Bassoon
Kelton Hopper
Taran Massey-Singh
Trombone
Duncan MacFarlane
Benjamin Glauser
Ethan Whitlow

Tuba
Umberto Quattrociocchi

Timpani/Percussion
Andrew Busch
Jonathan Huard
Madison Keats
Yi-Hsuan Lo

PROGRAM NOTES

The Bartered Bride Overture
Bedřich Smetana (1824–1884)

Of the many impulses that enlivened 19th-century Romanticism, none was more ardently promoted by its adherents than nationalism. Toward the middle of the century, some of those countries that had embraced foreign traditions - mainly German ones - began to turn inward, seeking an expression that touched more deeply their own native instincts. In Bohemia, nationalistic

pride was kindled first by Bedrich Smetana (1824-1884), then by Dvorák, later by Janácek. *The Bartered Bride*, Smetana's second opera (1866), stands in a pre-eminent position, credited with having established in its respective country a national musical consciousness. Early in his career, Smetana enjoyed success in two capacities: As a pianist he was reputed to be an especially fine Chopin interpreter; as a conductor, he headed Sweden's Göteborg Philharmonic Society for several years. Leaving the latter post and returning to Prague, he aided the cause of Czech musical art first by supporting the movement to build an opera house, second by writing truly Bohemian operas to put on its stage. *Bride*'s homely story of village life is cloaked in bright music that has enough melodic and rhythmic folk flavoring to make the Bohemian heartbeat faster, and enough pure musical value to agitate the non-Czech pulse.

The music of the Overture is drawn largely from the finale of Act II. In this scene, the hero signs a contract relinquishing his claim to his fiancée, and the legal sale is witnessed by the townspeople. The Overture begins with full orchestral thrust, out of which a scherzo-ish figure accumulates in the strings, and then a syncopated dance figure makes its vigorous appearance. These materials are developed with great instrumental brilliance - the Overture's high spirits are activated as much by virtuosic orchestration as by vital, folkish picturesqueness.
-Program note from LA Phil

Iberia: Le matin d'un jour de fête
Claude Debussy (1862–1918)

Just on the heels of his symphonic suite, *La Mer*, in 1905, Debussy began a new three-movement orchestral work entitled *Images for Orchestra*. *Images's* central movement, *Ibéria*, celebrates the essence of Spain, and as the suite's most popular movement, *Ibéria* is often performed alone. Debussy composed his impressionistic Iberian homage with little direct experience of Spain, but by instead relying on books and the musical expertise of his Spanish musician friends. And indeed, *Ibéria* uncannily evokes a dreamy and dancing world drenched in Spanish scents and flavors, infused with the essence of Spanish folk tunes, Moorish-influenced melodies, and Spanish dance rhythms. *Ibéria* itself is also cast in three movements. The third movement, "The Morning of a Festival Day," begins as a dance with driving rhythms in the lower strings. Soon, the violins and violas are directed to strum their instruments like guitars. About a minute later, a lone street fiddler wanders into the merry-making. As themes from the previous movements reappear, these happy minglings of musical jubilance conclude with a quick and glorious explosion of energy.
-Program note by Max Derrickson

Finlandia, Op. 26
Jean Sibelius (1865–1957)

Sibelius wrote *Finlandia* in 1899 to promote Finnish identity and arouse the Finns to detach themselves from the Russian Empire. The Czars had ruled Finland as a duchy for a hundred years—it was part of Sweden before that—and by the end of the 19th century most Finns wanted a country of their own. This would not actually happen until the end of World War I and the Russian Revolution. *Finlandia* is one of the composer's most familiar works. The hymn-like middle section has acquired words both religious and patriotic in several languages which are frequently performed around the world. "Dear land of home, our hearts to thee are holden" is an English version. Although it began as a piece of Finnish patriotism it has been adopted by many other nationalities and

adapted for various purposes. After all, music is not inherently nationalistic or religious, or happy or stately or scary for that matter. Music acquires meaning through traditions, context, usage, or text.

Although already in his mid-30s, Sibelius had written only a few pieces for orchestra, and here the composer is still finding his voice. *Finlandia* proceeds quite simply. The work opens with a slow introduction of growling bass instruments stating a heavily laden theme. Sibelius certainly owes a debt to Tchaikovsky in his orchestration here. The theme is repeated at a quicker tempo introducing rousing music, a call to arms to the Finnish people perhaps. After the music reaches a loud climax, we hear the hymn theme everyone recognizes but very softly and beautifully by the woodwinds. It is repeated but still at only a moderate volume in the strings, although underneath the timpani and bass drum rumble, perhaps the voices of the Finns stirring for a fight. The call to arms returns, but we never really get a full brash and triumphant version of the hymn, only the opening phrase loudly in the brass as a closing cadence.
-Program note by David Gilbert

Symphony No.4, Op.29 ("The inextinguishable")
Carl Nielsen (1865–1931)

Nielsen's domestic life continued to be a source of great stress in 1914. Infidelities (his) and the generally difficult circumstances of a multi-city professional life (his and hers) had begun to put significant strain on his marriage. As always, Nielsen attempted to weather the impasse through hard work as a conductor and educator but the mounting personal pressures where sure to necessitate some self-reflection in his compositional life as well. Symphony No. 4 (1916) dates from this period and it constituted Nielsen's strongest and most iconoclastic symphonic statement to date. This was partly attributable to his evolving maturity as a composer but also due to the inclusion of something rather new to his sound so far – outright conflict. If the 3rd Symphony was created to positively convey the musical characteristics of the human spirit and the natural world, the 4th could be read as an effort to present music as discrete and equal to man and nature, not merely their expressive proxy. It was the idea of music as a force in and of itself, capable of giving voice to "The Elemental Will of Life." Nielsen believed life and music to be enduring in the truest sense of the word and stated as much in the preface to the score. "Music is life," he wrote, "and, like it, is inextinguishable." The title of "Inextinguishable" was given to the symphony by Nielsen not as a programmatic reference but as "a suggestion as to a way into this, music's own territory." It did not mean the symphony lacked a readable dramatic arc because for a thing to be proven inextinguishable it must be put the test. Hence the aforementioned conflict as depicted in the final movement by dueling timpani in what must be among the most physically realistic journeys from tension to reward in all of music. The four movements of the symphony are performed without pause, which intensifies the experience by keeping the thread taught for the entire 30-plus minutes. This symphony often invites comparisons to Sibelius but these suggested similarities do both men harm. "The Inextinguishable" was pure Nielsen, which then and always spelled pure (and peerless) originality.
-Program note by Jeff Counts

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PERFORMANCE COLLECTION
Karen Wiseman, *librarian*

CONCERT OFFICE
Eric Chow, *supervisor*
Cory Bertrand, *front of house coordinator*

PERFORMANCE OFFICE
Ilinca Stafie,
Eddy Aitken, *performance administrator*